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ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS RELATED TO ORAL FRENCH PROGRAMS
IN URBAN SCHOOL SYSTEMS

by

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A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Administrative Problems Related to Oral French Programs in Urban School Systems" submitted by Sylvain David LeFebvre in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Education.

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to discover and analyze the present-day administrative problems related to elementary school oral French programs in the twenty urban school systems of the province. For the purpose of the study, an urban or city school system was defined as an Alberta school system employing a locally-appointed superintendent of schools. During the 1966-67 school year, there were twenty urban school systems or twenty school systems with locally-appointed superintendents of schools.

The data for the study were collected by means of three structured interview schedules answered by twenty superintendents of schools, seven program supervisors, and twenty-six principals of elementary schools offering an oral French program. The structured interview schedules were designed to obtain information about the interviewees and their schools or school systems, to discuss sixteen specific administrative problems, to elicit comments about additional administrative problems, and to request suggestions for improving oral French instruction.

During the 1966-67 school year, fourteen urban or city school systems were implementing oral French programs, and six systems had no oral French programs. Each system

with a program appeared to have its own special set of administrative problems, and only a few problems seemed to be applicable to all the fourteen school systems.

As far as the number of pupils is concerned, the most serious problem is access to television facilities and control of telecasting time for the Parlons Français program. Lack of adequate equipment is a severe drawback to the smooth implementation of the Bonjour Line program; and, in this instance, the unexpected breakdown of equipment often means the cancellation of oral French lessons. The shortage of teachers of French is a serious matter in the smaller and more isolated urban school systems and is preventing the extension of present oral French programs in all the urban school systems.

The establishment of a provincial body to provide a greater degree of leadership and coordination is considered one of the initial steps in solving several of the administrative problems related to the implementation of oral French programs at the elementary school level. The Department of Education, the Modern and Classical Language Council, and the universities of the province could unite their forces to organize the required body. Under this leadership and coordination body, all interested school systems could reap the full benefits of experience, experimentation, and research.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, many Canadians have been advocating the introduction of second language instruction in the elementary school. In Alberta, the advisability of beginning the study of a second language at the level of the elementary school is a current topic of discussion among school trustees, educational administrators, teachers, and laymen. It is argued that, through the learning of a second language, the individual acquires an improved understanding of himself and his neighbour; that he is better prepared for secondary school and university studies; and that he finds himself in a stronger position to play his role in international affairs. Some neurologists, like Dr. Wilder Penfield, claim that children of elementary school age can learn two or more languages without unreasonable effort and without harm to the mother tongue. According to some psychologists, like Dr. W. D. Dockrell, the knowledge of two languages provides a human being with two systems or two patterns for his thinking.

Canadian unity and national identity are advanced as arguments in favour of second language learning. As the English-speaking group of Canadians accounts for two-thirds of the population, and the French-speaking group makes up

approximately one-third, it would seem mutually advantageous to have fairly large segments of each group share in the language and culture of the other group. The federal government's decision to require all senior civil servants to possess a certain mastery of English and French is an attempt to foster Canadian unity and national identity.

The fact that the federal government uses English and French for many of its transactions and records means that a large number of English-speaking Canadians will have to learn the French language and that several French-speaking Canadians will have to learn the English language in order to qualify for senior civil service positions. A large scale training program has already been set up to teach the second language to civil servants. Should the federal government's plan for civil servants prove successful, it is believed that a new interest would be aroused in second language instruction and study.

The emerging attitude of the Canadian people towards the learning of a second language, the findings of psychology and linguistics, and government action in the sphere of second language learning are exerting a strong influence on education. As far as could be ascertained, no study, within the last six years, was undertaken to look into any aspect or phase of the administrative problems related to the implementation of a second language program in Alberta elementary

schools. In view of the recent developments on the Canadian scene, an investigation of the administrative problems related to second language programs seemed to be fully justified. Because of the rapidly changing conditions of society, a study that sought to identify and clarify the administrative problems related to second language programs would prove useful and informative.

I. PROBLEM

The problem consisted of the study of the administrative problems related to oral French programs at the elementary school level in the urban school systems of the province. Since, in Alberta, the local school systems are permitted to offer French instruction at all grade levels and may be responsible for French programs at the elementary level, it was expected that conditions connected with these programs would vary from system to system and that administrative problems related to French instruction would also be different from school system to school system. It was believed that the general climate of national and local opinion concerning the study of French and that the administrative problems related to elementary oral French were the factors determining the extent of introduction and the extent of implementation of oral French programs. In order to obtain a clear picture of the administrative problems encountered in

the implementation of an oral French program in the elementary school, it appeared necessary to secure information, to analyze the data, and to compile the results.

In the early planning stage of the study, the information at hand led one to believe that the general shortage of teachers and the specific shortage of qualified teachers of French were the main administrative problems related to oral French programs at the elementary school level. It was felt that school administrators, over and above the problems stated, faced a number of other administrative problems in the implementation of oral French programs, and there was the possibility that some of the other administrative problems could be as important and as serious as the shortage of teachers and the shortage of French teachers. Because of the lack of information concerning French instruction in Alberta elementary schools and because of the timeliness of research on oral French programs, a study was made dealing mainly with the administrative problems mentioned in this section and in the section entitled "Subproblems."

II. SUBPROBLEMS

As the study was carried out by means of open-end structured interview schedules answered by school superintendents, program supervisors, and school principals, it should be noted that a complete list of the administrative

problems could not and should not be included in the interview schedules, if the interviewees were to be given complete freedom to express their views. The three schedules of structured interviews were designed to touch upon the following points:

1. General information about the interviewee and his school or school system
2. Information about the elementary oral French program
3. Use of technical aids
4. Administrative problems encountered
5. Invitation to comment at length on any or all problems encountered
6. Suggestions for improvement

Experience as a school administrator and information from the literature on administrative problems indicated that the study had to investigate fairly thoroughly the following subproblems:

1. General teacher supply
2. Supply of teachers of French
3. Parent and community expectations and support
4. Interest of pupils in oral French
5. Interest of teachers in oral French
6. Instruction time available for elementary oral French

7. Articulation of elementary oral French programs with junior high school and senior high school programs.
8. Continuity of the oral French program from year to year
9. Selection of pupils for the program
10. Cost of the program
11. Availability of elementary oral French programs
12. Grading of pupils
13. Inservice education of teachers of French
14. Conditions of work of teachers of French
15. Accommodation of classes for French
16. Transportation of pupils

The sixteen subproblems enumerated in the structured interview schedules were discussed fully by the interviewees. School administrators suggested ten additional subproblems which were not directly included in the original list. The subproblems mentioned by the school administrators are given in the following list:

1. Population mobility
2. Retention of teachers of French
3. Adequate and standby equipment
4. Need of leadership
5. Outlet for the use of French
6. Educational and instructional television

7. Bilingual teacher aides and secretaries
8. Canadian programs
9. Ability grouping
10. New formula for financing education

III. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM

As far as could be determined, no recent study had been made to investigate the administrative problems related to elementary oral French programs. The emerging attitude of the Canadian people towards the learning of a second language, government action encouraging the acquisition of the knowledge of English and French, and the recent discoveries of psychology and linguistics made a study of the administrative problems related to elementary oral French programs a timely and worthwhile subject. Since the related literature was not only seriously limited but was also largely made up of estimates and opinions, it appeared useful and important that a study be undertaken to find out the facts and to suggest improvements.

IV. DELIMITATIONS

Only the city or urban school systems of Alberta were involved in this study. The following school districts made up the population:

Biggin Hill¹

Bonnyville

Calgary Public

Calgary Separate

Camrose

Edmonton Public

Edmonton Separate

Grande Prairie

Griesbach²

Lethbridge Public

Lethbridge Separate

Medicine Hat Public

Medicine Hat Separate

Red Deer Public

Red Deer Separate

St. Albert Public

St. Albert Separate

St. Paul

Stettler

¹The Biggin Hill School System is located on the Canadian Forces Base near Cold Lake, Alberta. The senior certificated educational administrator of the system performs most of the duties of an urban school superintendent. For this reason, the school system was included in the population.

²The Griesbach School System is located on the Canadian Forces Base north of Edmonton, Alberta. The reason for inclusion quoted above also applies to this system.

Wetaskiwin

During the 1966-67 school year, these twenty school systems provided education for more than one-half of the total school population of the province. As these districts were the largest and most able to make curriculum innovations, it was expected that elementary oral French programs would be in operation in a fairly large number of elementary schools. It was confirmed by the interviews that fourteen urban school systems were offering elementary oral French instruction.

V. LIMITATIONS

The study proposed to discover and identify the administrative problems related to elementary oral French programs in the urban school systems of Alberta. The study did not deal with administrative problems related to French programs in the junior high school and in the senior high school. School divisions, counties, independent districts, and many separate school districts were not included in the study. As the problem of the study was to find out what the administrative problems were, no attempt was made to describe the different French programs in use and no attempt was made to evaluate the various teaching methods. In view of the scope of this study, it was not planned to hold interviews with classroom teachers. Schools or classrooms using the

Alberta Bilingual Teachers' Association (Association des Educateurs Bilingues de l'Alberta) French program were not included in the study for, in this instance, the pupils have learned to speak French from their parents in the pre-school period.³

VI. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Elementary school means a school where one or more classrooms have been set aside for instruction in one or more of the first six grades of the Alberta school curriculum.

Urban or city school system refers to a school system having a locally-appointed superintendent of schools. The Department of Education and the Alberta School Trustees' Association occasionally employ the designation "urban" or "city" for school systems that appoint their own superintendent. According to Section 200 of The School Act, a school district must have a minimum of forty teachers in order to appoint a superintendent. During the 1966-67 school year, there were twenty urban or city school systems in

³In Alberta, there are some forty schools located in centres where the population is predominantly French-speaking. Under Section 386 of The School Act, French is used in these schools as a language of instruction. The French program in these schools has been prepared by l'Association des Educateurs Bilingues de l'Alberta and approved by the Alberta Department of Education. As 89 Bonnyville pupils and 270 St. Paul pupils were following this special French program during 1966-67, these pupils were eliminated from the study.

Alberta.

VII. PLAN OF THE STUDY

Three schedules of structured interviews were designed to collect the data required for the study. One schedule of interview dealt with the administrative problems encountered by the superintendents of schools; the second schedule focussed on the administrative problems of program supervisors; and the third set was used with elementary school principals who were administering an oral French program. The three schedules of interviews sought to elicit responses that revealed the administrative problems connected with the implementation of elementary oral French programs. It was felt that some overlapping in the schedules of structured interviews would serve the purpose of defining the administrative problems revealed.

In order to obtain the information required, the three schedules of structured interviews were constructed to touch upon the following points:

1. General information about the interviewee and his school or school system
2. Information about the elementary oral French program
3. Use of technical aids
4. Administrative problems encountered
5. Invitation to comment at length on any or all

problems encountered

6. Suggestions for improvement

Twenty urban superintendents of schools, seven program supervisors, and twenty-six elementary school principals were involved in the study. The twenty-six principals were selected in a random manner in such a way that every school system offering an oral French program was represented by one, two or three principals, depending upon the size of the system. The twenty school systems were visited during the months of January and February, 1967.

A matter which received close attention was the measure or criterion to be used to determine the relative importance of the administrative problems. It was decided that the number of pupils involved and the frequency of mention would prove a satisfactory method of indicating the importance of a problem. The use of such a method appeared to guarantee a greater degree of objectivity in the study.

Once the data had been collected, the first step was to classify the information according to the nature of the problem and, in certain cases, according to the administrative position of the interviewee. Explanations and interpretations in writing and in tabular form constituted the second step. In the third step, the data of the three groups were compared and analyzed fully. The last step consisted of conclusions, suggestions, and recommendations.

It should be noted that the appendix section contains abbreviated copies of the three schedules of structured interviews.

VIII. ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

Chapter I introduces the study and deals with the various phases of the problem. A brief summary of related information comprises Chapter II. A description of the instruments used, an outline of the methodology employed, a description of the sample used, an outline of the programs in use, and a mention of the enrollments are found in Chapter III. The analysis of data and findings constitute Chapter IV. The last chapter, Chapter V, contains the summary, the conclusions, and the recommendations.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The dearth of information about administrative problems related to elementary school oral French programs in Alberta makes research in this area somewhat difficult. As far as could be ascertained, only one study dealing partly with the administrative problems connected with elementary oral French programs is listed in the University of Alberta catalogue of theses.

Purvis¹ appears to be the only Albertan who has briefly discussed a small sector of the problems facing administrators who are implementing oral French programs. In his thesis, Purvis makes mention of teacher supply, costs, instruction time, selection of pupils, and articulation as factors having a bearing on second language program introduction and implementation in schools offering grades one through nine.

After a lapse of six years, it is believed that conditions have changed and that administrative problems today vary from the picture given by Purvis. It is also felt that new administrative problems have likely developed

¹Neil M. Purvis, "Second Language Programs" (unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Alberta, Edmonton, 1961), pp. 18-38.

since 1961.

I. TEACHER SUPPLY

Some understanding of the present situation with respect to the problem of general teacher supply can be obtained by referring to the statistics appearing in the Sixty-First Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta, 1966, covering school operations for 1965-66.² The report states that 16,364 teachers were rendering service in Alberta public schools and that, out of that number, 1,300 held letters of authority. According to the Alberta Department of Education Registrar, out of the 1,300 letters of authority, 757 were issued to elementary school teachers. It would seem that, during the 1965-66 school year, the shortage of elementary school teachers was a very serious matter. It cannot be expected, in view of the acute general shortage of teachers, that many school systems would stress oral French instruction and would plan to increase the scope of the present oral French programs.

The supply of teachers of French is directly affected by the general supply of teachers. When a regular teacher cannot be found for a classroom, school systems are compelled

²The Department of Education, Sixty-First Annual Report of the Department of Education of the Province of Alberta, 1966 (Edmonton: The Queen's Printer, 1967), p. 52.

to place the teacher of French in the regular classroom and to shelve the oral French program.

It is generally believed that a teacher who speaks French possesses the qualifications to teach oral French in the elementary school. This belief is only partly true, for the teaching of oral French today has become a science and requires a fair understanding of the program in use and a working knowledge of the equipment at hand. Mackey³ lists fifteen types of methods for language teaching and describes the main characteristics of each method. The French-speaking teacher, who has learned his French through the phonetic and grammar methods, is in a position to teach French to pupils who have some knowledge of French but finds that some preparation is required to teach oral French in the new scientific way. The new approach emphasizes the oral-aural method and stresses active participation on the part of both teacher and pupils.

The teaching of French to French-speaking pupils in Canadian elementary schools is presently undergoing changes that promise great emphasis on oral expression and active pupil participation.⁴ As a matter of fact, the discoveries

³ William Francis Mackey, Language Teaching Analysis (London: Longmans, Green and Company Limited, 1965), pp. 151-57.

⁴ Department of Education, A Special Course in French for Grades I to IX (Edmonton: The Queen's Printer, 1965), pp. 3-12.

of linguistic science are being applied to all language learning situations, including the teaching of English. It is hoped that, with better French programs in the schools, a larger number of bilingual high school graduates will possess the background in French required to choose the French pattern at the Faculty of Education. This turn of events is bound to increase the number of teachers of French, for it should always be borne in mind that the supply of teachers of French depends directly on the number of Grade Twelve graduates who go to college or university for teacher education.

Some promise is seen in the signing of an agreement between the University of Alberta and Le Collège Saint-Jean, whereby the first two years of teacher education are offered at the college and the last two years of the Bachelor of Education degree are taken at the university. The agreement envisages an increase in the number of well-qualified teachers of French for service in bilingual schools and in schools offering oral French programs.

II. COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS AND SUPPORT

Many authorities have attempted to assess the climate in Canada in respect to bilingualism and biculturalism.

Mason Wade⁵ seems to present an assessment which is based on personal experience, thorough analysis, and sound judgment. As the article which is summarized in this section is part of a talk given to a group of Ontario teachers, the contents seem to have a special meaning.

In discussing the situation in Canada, Wade advocates the granting to both founding races of equal rights to language and culture throughout the whole country. He claims that many changes in the attitudes of Canadians have already taken place, especially in business, industry, and university circles. He expects similar, but slower, changes in the other groups of society and foresees unity in diversity as a result.

Wade's hope that many Canadian communities will give their young citizens the opportunity of sharing the cultures and languages of both racial groups, has become a reality in many parts of the country. It is evident that the aim is not for every citizen to become bilingual, but rather for every Canadian to feel at home anywhere and everywhere in Canada, his homeland. In this province, it must be admitted that the University of Alberta, the Department of Education, and the newspapers have assumed the leadership in creating

⁵ Mason Wade, "A Pragmatic Approach to Bilingualism and Biculturalism," Canadian Modern Language Review, XXI (Summer, 1965), pp. 16-23.

an atmosphere favourable to bilingualism and biculturalism. It is certain that the atmosphere thus created is encouraging second language instruction and is assisting the crystallization of community expectations in this field.

Regardless of the time and effort put in by school administrators, no second language program will succeed unless community and parental support is evidenced on every hand. With respect to the United States, Roeming⁶ declares that large enrollments in second language classes are already a fact; that the use of technical aids has become a reality; and that the humanistic aspects of languages are the dominant reasons for their offering. Even at this early hour on the Canadian scene, there is some evidence to support Roeming's views with respect to the interest in second language learning, the use of technical aids, and the humanistic reasons for second language study. An analysis of the factors listed by Roeming clearly indicates that many communities and many citizens are giving their support to second language learning not only in a vocal manner, but also in a financial way.

⁶ Robert F. Roeming, "Issues We Must Face--An Editorial," The Modern Language Journal, XLIX (May, 1965), pp. 307-13.

III. INTEREST

Teachers who are compelled to teach a school subject against their wish seldom, if ever, succeed in providing the right climate for learning. It is clear that teachers, with no adequate preparation for oral French, can only approach the task with hesitancy and fear. Mackey⁷ states that the second language teacher must necessarily employ a method made up of a certain selection, gradation, presentation, and repetition of material. The teacher who uses an active oral-aural method and is able to incorporate correctly and easily the four steps mentioned by Mackey, is bound to be fairly well interested in his teaching.

The interest of special subject teachers is often dampened by administrators who, inadvertently, relegate the special subject to the bottom of the scale of values and schedule the special subject in the left-over slots of the timetable.⁸

Pupil interest in the study of a second language is determined by classroom arrangement, pupil motivation, teacher efficiency, school atmosphere, and community

⁷Mackey, loc. cit.

⁸James B. Conant, The Education of American Teachers (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1963), pp. 180-81.

support.⁹ As the pupil is the central figure in an oral French program and as all the efforts are directed towards the pupil in order to produce an individual who possesses native-like mastery of the new language, it is extremely important to pay attention to all the factors involved in creating pupil interest. Classroom arrangement and school atmosphere are closely connected with teacher efficiency and community support, which have already been discussed. According to Greenfield,¹⁰ observed differences in pupil achievement are associated with characteristics of pupils and organization to the degree or in the proportion of 67.64 per cent for characteristics of pupils and of 32.36 per cent for characteristics of organization. Since organization counts for nearly one-third of pupil achievement, it seems very significant that effective classroom, school, and district organization be provided to foster high pupil achievement in all subjects, including oral French.

⁹Center for Curriculum Development in Audio-Visual Language Teaching, The Chilton Foreign Language Handbook (Philadelphia: Chilton Book Company, 1965), p. 9.

¹⁰T. B. Greenfield, "Administration and Systems Analysis," The Canadian Administrator, III (April, 1964), p. 29.

CHAPTER III

INSTRUMENTATION, METHODOLOGY, SAMPLE, PROGRAMS AND ENROLLMENTS

I. INSTRUMENTATION

As very little up-to-date information could be found in the literature related to elementary oral French programs, it was decided to collect the data by means of three open-end schedules of structured interviews (Appendix A). Superintendents of schools were asked to answer Schedule A; program supervisors, Schedule B; and principals of elementary schools offering oral French, Schedule C.

The three schedules of structured interviews, planned to overlap in the seeking of information, touched upon the following points:

1. General information about the interviewees
2. Information about the school system or school
3. Interviewee's views about second language teaching
4. Use of technical aids
5. Administrative problems
6. Comments about the oral French program
7. Suggestions for improvement

As it was felt that some information about the interviewee would be an asset in making an analysis of the data, the heading "General information about the interviewee" was the first point to be included in the three schedules of interviews.

Under the heading "Information about the school system or school," an effort was made to obtain the history of second language instruction and details concerning the implementation of the present program. It was in this section of the interview schedule that, in a somewhat indirect way, the interviewee's point of view about oral French was given some attention. By answering a series of questions dealing with the actual program and another series dealing with the "ideal" program, the interviewee enabled the writer to make certain distinctions which served as a degree of measurement of at least the plus-or-minus type.

As the teaching of a second language is often closely linked to the use of technical aids, the heading "Use of technical aids" was included to obtain information regarding the extent of the use made of television, radio, films, and other aids. Questions bearing on the services of the Audio Visual Services Branch and the National Film Board were also added in order to find out what role was played by these bodies in the teaching of oral French in elementary schools.

Under the heading "Administrative problems," the

interviewee was first requested to list the most common problems encountered in the implementation of the oral French program. It was felt that this approach would help to set the stage for the section dealing with the enumeration of sixteen specific administrative problems.

The list of sixteen specific problems was considered the core of the study, and the schedules made ample provision of space for statements, comments, and explanations. The specific problems mentioned covered the following points:

1. General teacher supply
2. Supply of teachers of French
3. Community expectations and support
4. Availability of programs
5. Cost of programs
6. Articulation with junior and senior high school programs
7. Scheduling problems
8. Pupil interest
9. Teacher interest
10. Continuity of program from year to year
11. Selection of pupils for program
12. Grading of pupils
13. Accommodation of classes
14. Conditions of work of teachers of French
15. School boundaries and transportation

16. Inservice education program

The last section under "Administrative problems" attempted once more to bring to light problems which had not been discussed and which could seriously influence the oral French program. This device was intended to give the interviewee freedom of expression beyond the framework set in the previous section and to afford him the opportunity to add a new dimension to the study.

The heading "Comments" was designed to enable the interviewee to review the discussion up to this stage and to emphasize certain aspects or add further information. This heading played a vital role in affording the interviewee time to review the main headings before making suggestions for improvement. The comments made also indicated the interviewee's views with respect to second language instruction.

Once the administrative problems related to the implementation of an elementary oral French program had been mentioned and discussed, it was believed logical to expect the interviewee to make suggestions for the general improvement of the program. The last heading, "Suggestions for improvement," was added to elicit responses bearing on the possible means of improving elementary oral French programs at all levels--local, provincial, national, and international.

II. METHODOLOGY

Permission to try out the first draft of the structured interview schedules was granted in late November, 1966, and interviews were conducted in a small urban school system. The results of this project indicated that more data about the school system and the school were needed and that too much time was required for each interview schedule. The three schedules were revised accordingly, and final approval of their use was given in early December.

The twenty city school superintendents were contacted by letter (Appendix B) for the permission to visit their school systems and to interview the three levels of school administrators. All superintendents replied affirmatively and promised their cooperation. The visitation of school systems was carried out during January and February, 1967.

Each schedule of interview was re-read and written out completely immediately after the appointment to ensure the accuracy of the report. In some cases, follow-up telephone calls were made to ascertain the meaning of certain terms and statements; and, in two instances, a second visit was made to obtain additional information. Close cooperation was extended by all the interviewees, and keen interest in second language programs made visitation a very pleasant task.

In order not to reveal the identity of the interviewees, numbers instead of names have been used in all the tables where this practice was deemed necessary. Table I was prepared to provide fairly complete information with respect to interview time with superintendents. It was also decided, in this case, to indicate whether or not an oral French program was being implemented at the elementary school level, as this factor could affect the length of the interview.

The shortest interview with a superintendent of schools required sixty minutes, and the longest lasted one hundred eighty minutes. The average interview time with this group was 107.25 minutes.

As all program supervisors interviewed were working for school systems offering an elementary school oral French program, Table II did not have to indicate this information. It should be noted that the longest interview with a program supervisor took one hundred eighty-five minutes, and the shortest interview had a duration of ninety minutes. The average interview time with supervisors was 127.29 minutes.

The interview time with the principals ranged from seventy minutes to one hundred fifty minutes. As shown in Table III, the average interview time was 88.46 minutes.

Plans were made to compile the data collected as soon as all the interviews were completed. As this compiling procedure appeared largely self-evident, it was felt that

TABLE I
INTERVIEW TIME IN MINUTES--SUPERINTENDENTS

Interviewees	Interview time	Offering program	Not offering program
1	120	x	
2	150	x	
3	70	x	
4	120	x	
5	150		x
6	90	x	
7	165	x	
8	90	x	
9	90	x	
10	60		x
11	100	x	
12	100		x
13	100	x	
14	90	x	
15	80		x
16	90	x	
17	105	x	
18	180	x	
19	105		x
20	90		x
Total	2,145	14	6
Average	107.25	-	-

TABLE II
INTERVIEW TIME IN MINUTES--PROGRAM SUPERVISORS

Interviewees	Interview Time
21	90
22	160
23	185
24	110
25	90
26	90
27	180
Total	905
Average	127.29

TABLE III
INTERVIEW TIME IN MINUTES--PRINCIPALS

Interviewees	Interview time
28	85
29	70
30	75
31	120
32	90
33	100
34	95
35	100
36	100
37	95
38	105
39	75
40	90
41	90
42	75
43	70
44	90
45	70
46	75
47	90
48	95
49	70
50	70
51	80
52	75
53	150
Total	2,300
Average	88.46

very little would be gained by describing this phase of the work more extensively.

III. SAMPLE

To collect the data for the study, fifty-three school administrators were visited and interviewed. Though it had been foreseen that all of the urban school superintendents would answer Schedule A of the structured interview, sixteen urban superintendents and four assistant-superintendents were actually interviewed. The superintendents of the four largest city systems, because of their numerous responsibilities, could not take the time for the interviews and arranged for the participation of their assistant-superintendents. For the sake of brevity, throughout the study, this group is referred to as "superintendents."

Six city school systems had supervisors of French, and one system employed a coordinator of elementary education. In the seven remaining systems with an oral French program at the elementary school level, the supervision of the program was carried out by the superintendent. Throughout the study, the term "program supervisors" will imply the six supervisors of French and the coordinator of elementary education. Schedule B of the structured interview was used with this group.

Twenty-six principals of schools offering an

elementary school oral French program were selected for Schedule C of the structured interview. In all school systems with an oral French program, from one to three principals were interviewed, depending on the size of the school system. In school systems with many schools offering oral French at the elementary school level, a random choice of principals was made for the interviews. In two elementary-junior high schools, the principals had given the vice-principals the supervision of the elementary grades; and for the purpose of the interviews, the vice-principals were visited. For the sake of simplicity, the term "principals" has been used throughout the study to refer to the twenty-four principals and the two vice-principals.

Certain characteristics of the population of urban school superintendents were classified and summarized in Table IV to provide a more complete picture of this group of the sample of interviewees.

During the 1966-67 school year, the teacher education of the twenty urban school superintendents ranged from four to eight years, with the average being 6.3 years. Some superintendents had attended university in 1966; one had last been at university twenty years ago; and fourteen had attended university during the 1960's. Nine superintendents had never taken university French courses; six had taken one course; one had taken two; one had four courses; one superintendent had

TABLE IV
INFORMATION ABOUT SUPERINTENDENTS

Superin- tendents	Teacher educa- tion	Last year at univ.	Univ. French courses taken	Present MCLC* member	Past MCLC mbr.	Receiving O.F. public's	1966-67 elem. sch. enrollment
1	6	1966	0	No	No	No	1,326
2	6	1965	5	No	Yes	Yes	525
3	6	1960	0	No	No	Yes	37,768
4	8	1964	6	No	No	Yes	10,239
5	7	1956	0	No	No	Yes	763
6	6	1948	1	No	No	Yes	35,111
7	7	1966	1	No	No	Yes	15,510
8	7	1963	1	No	No	No	1,350
9	6	1965	0	No	No	No	781
10	8	1947	0	Yes	Yes	Yes	3,742
11	6	1952	0	No	No	Yes	1,094
12	7	1960	0	No	No	No	2,669
13	6	1964	6	No	Yes	No	859
14	6	1953	1	No	No	Yes	2,943
15	6	1955	1	No	No	Yes	695
16	5	1963	2	No	No	Yes	847
17	7	1962	0	No	No	Yes	1,234
18	6	1966	4	No	Yes	Yes	787
19	6	1966	1	No	No	No	566
20	4	1946	0	No	No	No	689
Total	126	--	--	1 Yes 19 No	4 Yes 16 No	13 Yes 7 No	119,498 --
Average	6.3	--	--				

*MCLC mbr. means a member of the Modern and Classical Language Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association.

five courses; and one had six French courses.

A very minor role was played by the Alberta Teachers' Association Modern and Classical Language Council, as far as the group of superintendents was concerned. Though four superintendents were past members of the council, only one was an active member during 1966-67. Thirteen superintendents were receiving publications dealing with the teaching of oral French during the same period.

Table V indicates that the teacher education of the seven program supervisors ranged from four to seven years, with 5.3 years being the average. Six program supervisors had attended university in 1966; the seventh, though not taking university courses, was engaged in French reading and literature research. The number of university French courses taken ranged from four to thirteen, with the average being approximately nine. All program supervisors spoke French fluently, received publications dealing with the teaching of oral French, and were acquainted with the work of the Modern and Classical Language Council. The experience of program supervisors covered a spread of one to sixteen years, with the average being approximately 4.4 years.

The data on the twenty-six school principals have been classified and summarized in Table VI. The teacher education of the twenty-six principals included in the sample ranged from two to seven years, with the average being slightly under

TABLE V
INFORMATION ABOUT PROGRAM SUPERVISORS

Super- visors	Teacher educ'n	Last year at univ.	Univ. Fr. courses taken	Ability to speak French	Present MCLC* member	Past MCLC mbr.	Rec. O.F. pub'ns	Experience as supervisor
21	4	1966	7	Fluent	Yes	Yes	Yes	1
22	6	1966	12	Fluent	Yes	Yes	Yes	4
23	7	1966	12	Fluent	Yes	Yes	Yes	5
24	5	1952	8	Fluent	No	No	Yes	16
25	5	1966	13	Fluent	Yes	Yes	Yes	1
26	6	1966	6	Fluent	Yes	Yes	Yes	3
27	4	1966	4	Fluent	Yes	Yes	Yes	1
Total	37	--	62	--	6 Yes 1 No	6 Yes 1 No	7 Yes 0 No	31 4.4
Average	5.3	--	8.9	--				

*MCLC mbr. means a member of the Modern and Classical Language Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association.

TABLE VI

INFORMATION ABOUT PRINCIPALS

Prin- cipals	Teacher educ'n	Last year at univ.	Univ. Fr. courses taken	Ability to speak French	Present MCLC member	Past MCLC mbr.	Rec. O.F. pub'ns	Experience as principal
28	5	1966	1	Nil	No	No	Yes	14
29	5	1961	1	Nil	No	No	No	1
30	4	1965	5	Fluent	Yes	Yes	Yes	1
31	6	1959	12	Fluent	Yes	Yes	Yes	10
32	4	1949	1	Nil	No	No	No	31
33	4	1956	0	Nil	No	No	No	9
34	6	1966	1	Nil	No	No	Yes	1
35	5	1965	2	Nil	No	No	Yes	2
36	6	1966	0	Fair	No	No	Yes	3
37	6	1966	0	Nil	No	No	No	3
38	6	1966	0	Nil	No	No	Yes	2
39	4	1966	0	Fair	No	No	Yes	4
40	6	1966	0	Nil	No	No	No	14
41	4	1966	0	Fair	No	No	Yes	3
42	7	1959	0	Nil	No	No	No	21
43	6	1963	0	Nil	No	No	Yes	9
44	4	1964	0	Nil	No	No	No	18
45	4	1962	0	Nil	No	No	No	3
46	2	1964	4	Fluent	No	No	No	2
47	6	1962	0	Nil	No	No	No	10
48	4	1966	0	Nil	No	No	No	12
49	6	1966	0	Nil	No	No	Yes	7
50	5	1959	3	Fair	No	No	Yes	7
51	4	1964	0	Nil	No	No	No	2
52	5	1966	0	Nil	No	No	Yes	7
53	4	1966	3	Fluent	No	No	No	9
Total	128	--	33	4 Fluent	2 Yes	2 Yes	13 Yes	205
Average	4.9	--	1.3	4 Fair	24 No	24 No	13 No	7.9
				18 Nil				

five years. One principal had not attended university since 1949--seventeen years ago; twenty-one had been to university during the 1960's. With respect to the ability to speak French, four principals were quite fluent; four possessed a fair mastery of the language; and eighteen stated that they were not able to speak the language. Only two principals had been and were still members of the Modern and Classical Language Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association. Thirteen principals subscribed to publications for teachers of French. Though one principal had thirty-one years of experience as a principal and three had only one year, the average was just under eight years of experience.

IV. PROGRAMS AND ENROLLMENTS

A greater understanding of the sample can be gained by an examination of Table VII which deals with the scope of elementary oral French programs in Alberta urban school systems during the 1966-67 school year. The Parlons Français program makes use of a competent television teacher, Mme Slack, competent supervisors, and classroom teachers with a minimum of matriculation French. At each grade level, a telecast lesson is followed by two classroom lessons which emphasize the points taught in the television lesson. As a rule, all lessons have a duration of fifteen minutes. Each classroom teacher has the Parlons Français Teacher Guide

TABLE VII

1966-67 ORAL FRENCH PROGRAMS IN URBAN SYSTEMS

Systems	Programs	Grades	Enroll- ment
Biggin Hill	Oral French Programme	4-6	595
Bonnyville	French with Pictures ^a	5-6	75*
Calgary Public	Parlons Français	4-6	17,702
Calgary Separate	Parlons Français	4-6	4,446
Camrose	--	--	--
Edmonton Public	Bonjour Line	5-6	11,098
Edmonton Separate	Parlons Français ^b	4-6	7,024
Grande Prairie	Bonjour Line	5-6	100
Griesbach	Oral French Programme	4-6	351
Lethbridge Public	--	--	--
Lethbridge Separate	Conversation with Pictures ^c	5-6	46
Medicine Hat Public	--	--	--
Medicine Hat Sep.	Audio-Lingual Materials	3-6	55
Red Deer Public	Bonjour Line	4-6	1,364
Red Deer Separate	--	--	--
St. Albert Public	Bonjour Line	4-6	366
St. Albert Sep.	Bonjour Line	4-6	531
St. Paul	Bonjour Line	3-6	198**
Stettler	--	--	--
Wetaskiwin	--	--	--

^aProgram developed by teachers offering French.

^bProgram modified by supervisor and called Causons en Français. Projectors, instead of television facilities, used during 1966-67.

^cProgram developed by teachers several years ago.

*Eighty-nine French-speaking pupils not included.

**Two hundred seventy French-speaking pupils not included.

which is the main source of information for the implementation of the program.

Bonjour Line is a program which uses a slide projector and a tape-recorder in the classroom. Picture and sound are synchronized so that the native speaker's voice describes in a sentence what is projected. Once the pupils have learned the caption or sentence, the classroom teacher extends the use of the memorized pattern by the application of drill of the transformation type. Through repetition, automaticity of response is established. Because Bonjour Line employs technical aids at the teacher's discretion, the program is fairly flexible but calls for an instructor with competence in the French language. Bonjour Line was prepared to precede Voix et Images de France, the junior high school program, and very good articulation has been assured between the two programs.

The Oral French Programme was prepared by Florence E. Bradford, M.A., Supervisor of French, City of Ottawa Public Schools, and Marjorie J. Findlay, Teacher of French, City of Ottawa Public Schools, and appeared on the market in 1959. At all grade levels, there are textbooks for pupils and manuals for teachers. The program, which is built around themes, like the classroom and the parts of the body, makes use of wall pictures and vocabulary lists. The manuals stress the fact that the main aim of the program is conversation.

It is evident that a well-qualified teacher is required for the program. Oral French Programme was one of the first sequential programs on the market.

French With Pictures and Conversation With Pictures are programs which were developed by interested teachers of two urban school systems. The two programs make use of pictures, wall charts, and real objects in teaching French. These programs depend largely on the competence of the teachers for their success. The Audio-Lingual Materials program stresses listening and speaking in its approach. A very limited use of technical aids is made, and the teacher must possess competence in the French language.

Table VII indicates that fourteen urban school systems had an elementary oral French program and six systems had no program. In the case of the fourteen systems with a program, the table mentions the programs used, the grades involved, and the enrollments in elementary oral French. During the 1966-67 school year, 43,951 pupils were registered in elementary oral French programs offered by fourteen city or urban school systems of Alberta. Table VIII lists the various programs used to teach oral French in urban elementary schools, the enrollment of pupils in each program, and the total enrollment of urban elementary pupils in oral French.

As can be seen, only 1,112 pupils were learning French by means of programs employing technical aids on a

limited scale. As the teacher of French for one school was Saskatchewan-trained, he had decided to use the Audio-Lingual Materials program for his classes. One school system had been teaching French for some ten years and, as no sequential program was available at that early date, had to design its own program. Another school system, in its first year of implementation of an oral French program, was experimenting with a teacher-made program because the decision to offer French was made too late to budget for the Bonjour Line program. The two systems using the Oral French Programme had

TABLE VIII
PROGRAMS AND ENROLLMENTS

Programs	Enrollments
Audio-Lingual Materials Program	55
Locally-Developed Programs	121
Oral French Programme	946
Bonjour Line	13,657
Parlons Français	<u>29,172</u>
Total	43,951

been teaching oral French for thirteen years and were satisfied with the results. School systems with access to the television medium had chosen the Parlons Français program.

The Bonjour Line program was being used by six school systems--one large system and five small ones.

Table IX attempts to give an overview of some of the main features of the twenty-six schools in the sample. In four schools, the elementary oral French program was in its thirteenth year; and, in three schools, the program was being offered for the first time. The arithmetic mean was approximately six years of French offering for the twenty-six schools.

There were seventy-six teachers involved in the teaching of an elementary oral French program in the twenty-six schools visited, for an average of nearly three teachers per school. Schools using the Parlons Français program and the Bonjour Line program, as a rule, had one teacher per class, while schools using the other programs had a teacher who taught several classes.

Only two schools offered oral French at the Grade Three level; nineteen schools included Grade Four pupils in their programs; and all the twenty-six schools had a program for Grades Five and Six. The sample of twenty-six schools offered elementary oral French to 4,019 pupils, thus giving an average of 154.6 pupils per school.

An examination of Table X reveals that the number of elementary oral French periods per week ranged from two to five and averaged 3.84 periods per week. With respect to the length of periods in minutes, the shortest period was

TABLE IX
INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOLS

List of schools	Years of oral French program	Number of oral French teachers	Grades oral French taught	School enrollment
28	13	1	4-6	93
29	13	1	4-6	244
30	1	3	5-6	67
31	4	5	4-6	163
32	6	11	4-6	460
33	5	5	4-6	103
34	8	2	4-6	97
35	5	6	4-6	259
36	2	5	5-6	157
37	1	2	5-6	155
38	2	2	5-6	116
39	4	3	4-6	130
40	6	1	4-6	98
41	3	1	5-6	100
42	13	1	4-6	238
43	13	1	4-6	138
44	10	1	5-6	21
45	7	1	5-6	25
46	1	1	3-6	55
47	4	1	4-6	127
48	3	2	4-6	199
49	9	4	4-6	207
50	4	4	4-6	192
51	6	1	4-6	264
52	9	2	4-6	113
53	5	9	3-6	198
Total	157	76	-	4,019
Average	6.04	2.92		154.6

TABLE X
INFORMATION ABOUT INSTRUCTION TIME

List of schools	Periods per week	Minutes per period
28	(2 Gr. 4	30
	(3 Grs. 5,6	25
29	2	38
30	(5 Grs. 5,6	15
	(2 Gr. 5	35
31	5	15
32	5	15
33	5	15
34	5	15
35	5	15
36	3	30
37	5	15
38	4	20
39	5	20
40	5	20
41	3	15
42	3	25
43	3	30
44	3	20
45	4	15
46	2	30
47	4	25
48	(3 Gr. 4	33
	(4 Gr. 5	25
	(5 Gr. 6	20
49	4	25
50	5	30
51	(4 Grs. 4,5	25
	(3 Gr. 6	36
52	3	38
53	5	20
Total	119	2,638
Average	3.84	22.17

was fifteen minutes, and the longest was thirty-eight minutes. The total number of minutes devoted to French instruction by the twenty-six schools was 2,638 minutes per week, and the average time per period was 22.17 minutes. The combination of the average number of periods per week and of the average number of minutes per period provided an average instructional time of (3.84×22.17) 84.93 minutes for elementary oral French per week.

A fairly complete description of the instrumentation, the methodology, the sample, and the programs and enrollments has been given to facilitate the understanding of the balance of the study. The next chapter, Chapter IV, will deal extensively with the administrative problems related to the implementation of elementary oral French programs in the urban school systems of Alberta.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND FINDINGS

I. VIEWS

The visitation of the twenty urban school systems revealed that fourteen systems were offering oral French at the elementary school level and that six systems had no French program. As it was felt that the reasons for not offering an oral French program would have a bearing on the results of the study, an effort was made to find out why no program was instituted. The reasons given by the superintendents have been compiled in Table XI.

TABLE XI

REASONS FOR NOT OFFERING A FRENCH PROGRAM

Reasons	Number of Systems
Public indifference	4
Teacher shortage	4
Preference for other 2nd language	4
Cost	4
Timetable conflicts	1
Lack of teacher interest	1

Four boards of urban school systems had decided not to offer an elementary French program until parental pressure and community support were in greater evidence. In these systems, the trustees and the superintendents believed that, because of public indifference, French programs would receive lukewarm acceptance and would be a liability instead of an asset. The fact that the boards had decided not to offer French also meant that very few elementary teachers in these systems were qualified to teach French. In the other two systems, the boards had considered the matter and had requested the superintendents to make plans for a French program in a few selected elementary schools.

Four superintendents were of the opinion that public indifference was directly related to the choice of second language to be made by the boards. Centres with large concentrations of German-speaking or Norwegian-speaking Canadians would likely prefer German or Norwegian to French as a second language in the elementary school.

The cost of organizing a French program, of purchasing the necessary equipment and material, and of arranging for inservice education sessions was believed to be beyond the present financial means of four school systems. According to four interviewees, an elementary oral French program could only be financed by using funds already earmarked for other vital elementary school services.

One superintendent stated that the introduction of an elementary French program would complicate an already complicated timetable. He also feared that "core subjects" would suffer because of a reduction in instruction time. A school system with a stable elementary staff complained that the teachers' lack of interest in oral French was preventing the implementation at the moment. It was hoped that gradual change in personnel would enable the offering of French in a few selected elementary schools during the 1967-68 school year.

When an attempt was made to find out why fourteen urban school systems had decided to offer an elementary oral French program, in every case, the initiation of second language instruction could be traced to the efforts of an individual or group of individuals who were well-informed about the latest developments in second language teaching and who were recognized as community leaders. Teachers, principals, school superintendents, Department of Education officials, university professors, federal government representatives, home-and-school officials, school trustees, local government members, and newspaper reporters were mentioned as having had a hand in promoting oral French programs for their elementary schools.

The superintendents and the principals advanced a number of reasons for offering an elementary school oral

French program. The reasons stated were compiled under twelve headings in Table XII. Because of the overlapping nature of the information, it should be borne in mind that the headings are not mutually exclusive.

Twenty-nine interviewees believed that the knowledge of more than one language was an asset to the individual. Twenty-three superintendents and principals also stated that present Canadian conditions justified the offering of oral French at the elementary school level. Twelve administrators had heard or read about the recommendations of experts in the field of second language teaching and, for this reason, advocated teaching French at an early age. It was mentioned by eleven interviewees that young children were easily motivated, possessed a keen memory, and were mentally and physically flexible. At a tender age, there were no inhibitions; and, as a result, participation in second language activities was of a high order. As all the programs were designed to emphasize the oral approach, eleven administrators believed that the importance of participation should not be overlooked.

Six superintendents and five principals said that instruction time, programs, and teachers could be found to offer oral French in a number of their elementary schools; and, as a consequence, the boards had decided to try out a program.

TABLE XII
REASONS FOR OFFERING ORAL FRENCH PROGRAMS

Reasons	Superin- tendents	Princi- pals	Both
Cultural advantages	14	15	29
Bilingual nature of Canada	10	13	23
Early start advocated by experts	5	7	12
Traits, like flexibility, motivation memory	6	5	11
Lack of inhibitions, participation	4	7	11
Time, programs, teachers available for oral French	6	5	11
International and economic advantages	8	2	10
Value of oral approach	5	4	9
Academic success in high school	5	2	7
Popular trend	3	2	5
Community pressure	4	1	5
No interference with maternal tongue	1	3	4

Ten persons interviewed suggested that the ability to speak English and French meant wider job opportunities and better promotion possibilities. Especially in the armed forces was the ability to speak English and French considered a very important factor for international service. Seven administrators were inclined to think that academic success in high school was an underlying reason for offering oral French at the elementary school level.

Five interviewees admitted that the popularity of oral French programs in neighbouring school systems had influenced their own decision to offer French. In centres where public and separate school systems operate side by side, the decision of one system often affects the decision of the other system. In this instance, the supporters of a school system apply pressure on the school board to obtain parity of offering. Five interviewees were under the impression that their French programs had been initiated because of this kind of community pressure.

One superintendent and three principals strongly believed that a child could learn two or more languages at the same time without ill effects to the learning of his maternal tongue.

II. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

It was learned that four large urban school systems had established a policy requiring elementary schools to devote 60 per cent of the school day to the "core subjects"-- reading, language, arithmetic, science, and social studies-- and 40 per cent to the other subjects, including oral French. In the smaller systems, the same pattern existed though less formality was in evidence. It was generally agreed that the elementary oral French programs offered in 1966-67 could be accommodated within the 60 per cent - 40 per cent framework.

A general reduction in instruction time devoted to all subjects and in free and library periods had taken place in order to include an oral French program in the elementary school timetable. The fourteen school systems with an oral French program claimed that French added a new dimension to the school program and provided a more favourable learning climate. In six schools, an effort was made to include French numbers in the music program and in the school concerts. It was generally felt that oral French compensated adequately for the reduction in instruction time and in free and library periods.

According to the principals, though a few instructions were given in English before and after the daily lesson in some cases, the program was taught completely in French in

keeping with the latest findings of the experts in second language teaching. With the use of "active" and "aural-oral" methods for the teaching of oral French, the pupils were given the opportunity to hear and to speak the language for nearly the whole period of instruction. A great deal of importance was attached to the value of the oral approach in teaching a second language. Four large school systems were introducing writing at the Grade Six level, as it was believed that the pupils were sufficiently advanced to bring in writing as a reinforcement. It also was the feeling of six supervisors and principals that readers should be introduced in the third year of oral French instruction; but, so far, no satisfactory series of readers had been found.

All the interviewees were in agreement that materials from the Audio-Visual Services Branch of the Department of Education and the National Film Board were used on a very limited scale. As the programs were designed as complete and self-sufficient instruments, there was little need of additional aids.

Table XIII illustrates a number of interesting facts concerning the introduction and implementation of oral French programs in elementary schools. No interviewee stated that the oral French program was introduced too early; seven were of the opinion that the present practice of their respective school systems was just right; forty-five

TABLE XIII

PRESENT PRACTICE AND SUGGESTED PRACTICE OF BEGINNING
ORAL FRENCH INSTRUCTION

List of inter- viewees	Present practice (grade)	Suggested practice (grade)	List of inter- viewees	Present practice (grade)	Suggested practice (grade)
1	4	4	28	4	4
2	5	K or 1	29	4	K
3	4	K or 1	30	5	1
4	4	2	31	4	K
5	-	3	32	4	4
6	5	5	33	4	K
7	4	1	34	4	1
8	5	4	35	4	1
9	4	K or 1	36	5	4
10	-	-	37	5	1
11	5	1	38	5	4
12	-	K or 1	39	4	1
13	3	1	40	4	4
14	4	1	41	5	4
15	-	1	42	4	1
16	4	Jan. 1	43	4	1
17	4	2 or 3	44	5	1
18	3	Jan. 1	45	5	1
19	-	1	46	3	1
20	-	1	47	4	2
21	4	1	48	4	3
22	4	1	49	4	Jan. 1
23	5	1	50	4	1
24	4	1	51	4	1
25	4	1	52	4	4
26	4	1	53	3	3
27	3	Jan. 1			

superintendents, supervisors, and principals claimed that oral French should be offered in earlier grades than at the moment. Thirty-six interviewees would like to see an oral French program in operation in Kindergarten or Grade One. As there were no satisfactory programs for the first two or three grades of the elementary school, a number of interviewees said that they had to be realistic and had to "tailor" the grades according to existing programs. The majority of interviewees wanted the development of programs "tailored" to accommodate the needs of the pupils from the earliest years. In keeping with the early childhood philosophy of education, the administrators hoped for an elementary school oral French program that would produce the optimum results without ill effects to the other school subjects and without ill effects to school finance. Two school principals were seriously planning to extend their oral French programs during the 1967-68 school year.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS

General Teacher Supply

Seven city school systems did not experience too much difficulty in finding regular classroom teachers. Some of these systems even had waiting lists of teachers at the time of the visit. These were, of course, the larger city systems and those adjacent to large centres. Even these favourably

located systems complained about the shortage of specialists, like guidance counsellors, music teachers, primary teachers, female physical education teachers, industrial arts instructors, and vocational education teachers.

The other thirteen systems, mostly the smaller and more isolated ones, were experiencing hardship in staffing their schools with regular classroom teachers. It was felt, however, that some improvement in the general teacher supply was slowly taking place from year to year. These systems had a great deal of difficulty in finding special subject teachers and, in many cases, were compelled to stress the academic pattern. This group of school systems often complained that the large centres were absorbing all the teachers coming out of the universities.

Supply of Teachers of French

There was a time when the supply of teachers of elementary school French was very limited, and oral French programs had to be restricted accordingly. As a result of this situation, the universities of the province moved into the field of teacher preparation for oral French at the elementary school level. Five large city systems, under the leadership of the program supervisors, initiated intensive inservice education programs for teachers of oral French. In two systems, television was used to assist in the inservice

education activities centred around the Parlons Français program. In another large system, the facilities of the Faculty of Education were being used in the evening and on Saturday for inservice education related to the Bonjour Line program.

Though the program supervisors of five large city systems stated that they had a sufficient number of teachers of French for the implementation of the existing oral French programs, they declared that the present supply of teachers of French would not enable them to extend the programs.

The other nine school systems offering oral French and the two systems making plans to offer elementary school oral French in 1967-68 did state that finding well-qualified teachers of French was a key administrative problem. In the nine systems already offering a program, the teachers of French, as a rule, were asked to teach several classes of oral French per day. The use of a teacher of French for several classes was most helpful in reducing the shortage of French teachers but often caused timetable complications. Mention was also made that the choice of oral French program was largely determined by the number of teachers available for the teaching of French. It should be borne in mind that school systems using the Parlons Français program had a large number of French teachers on staff because the program was telecast only once during the day. Table XIV gives a

summary of the information obtained concerning the supply of teachers of French in the fourteen school systems with a program at the moment and in the sixteen systems planning a program in the future.

TABLE XIV

SUPPLY OF TEACHERS OF FRENCH IN CITY SCHOOL SYSTEMS
OFFERING OR PLANNING TO OFFER ORAL FRENCH

Programs	Supply	
	Adequate	Inadequate
1966-67 programs	5	9
1967-68 programs	5	11
Future program extensions	0	16

Superintendents and principals did not agree fully on the teacher shortage issue. Four principals were of the opinion that the shortage of teachers was far more acute than stated by superintendents. To emphasize this point, the principals mentioned classrooms with enrollments over thirty and French classes with the same number of pupils. Because of the active and aural-oral nature of the French programs used, principals wanted French classes with an enrollment of twenty to twenty-five.

Community Expectations and Support

The fourteen school systems offering an oral French program in the elementary grades had encountered very little opposition to the teaching of French in the last two or three years. According to three principals, some parents had complained about French, but these same parents seemed to complain about every thing that "went on" in the school. In two school systems, the decision to offer French rested with the principals, who were better acquainted with the feelings of the parents in the attendance area. Over a number of years, this approach had the results of seeing the implementation of an elementary school oral French program in nearly every school of the systems concerned. As far as could be ascertained, no system offering French had had to give up or reduce the offering because of lack of community or parental support. Two school systems, because of parental requests, were planning to extend their programs. As was already mentioned, forty-five school administrators believed that the oral French program should be extended by introducing French in grades lower than at the present (Table XIII, page 53).

Six school systems were not offering an elementary French program during 1966-67. According to four urban superintendents, board, community, and parental support was lacking for a French program; public interest, however, would

have been high for a German or Norwegian language program. The other two urban school systems were making plans to offer French in a few selected elementary schools during the 1967-68 school year.

Twenty-nine school administrators stated that modern society was attaching more and more importance to the ability to speak two or more languages (Table XII, page 49). They favoured the oral approach to second language learning for this reason and lamented their own high school experience with bookish French courses. Though high school academic success was still considered a valid reason for offering elementary school French, it appeared that academic success was viewed more as a by-product than a product of the oral French program. Two school systems had organized adult education classes in basic French for parents who wanted to learn French well enough to converse with their own children. Because of the emphasis on the oral aspect of second language learning, some forty school administrators desired a sequential program covering ten to twelve years. As was mentioned earlier, ten interviewees expected economic advantages as products of the oral French program.

Availability of Programs

There was a time when sequential elementary school oral French programs could not be obtained at any price.

Today, however, it was claimed that at least four or five classroom-tested programs could be found for upper elementary school pupils. The fourteen urban school systems offering oral French were fairly well satisfied with the results. Four school systems with five or more years of experience with oral French were asking for programs with some writing at the Grade Six level; six administrators were convinced that reading should be introduced in the third year of oral French instruction; and two supervisors stated that programs with writing and reading were being prepared and developed by local and national groups.

The systems using the Parlons Français program asserted that access to television facilities and control of telecast time were urgently required for the success of the program. Two large centres had already taken steps to obtain television facilities, and hopes were high that these facilities would be available in 1968.

The kind of program which was not available and which seemed to be needed was an oral French program for primary grade pupils. Many administrators wanted to experiment with oral French in Grade One but, so far, had been unable to find a satisfactory program. Two supervisors thought that, at the rate programs were being developed today, it was only a matter of a year or two before many good programs for primary pupils would be available.

Cost of Program

Eight small urban school systems were not in a position to quote a figure for the cost of the oral French offering in their elementary schools. The program supervisors of two large systems stated that the cost of materials and equipment required for oral French was less than three dollars per pupil per year. The supervisors of two other large systems felt that the cost of the program would be about the same amount for their systems. In two school systems, the budget contained no special allowance for the French program. The only funds available for the program consisted of a twenty-cent allowance per pupil for French books. In these two systems, maintaining the present program required the maximum effort on the part of the administrators, and experimenting with other programs was financially impossible.

It should be noted that, for the 1966 fiscal year, eighteen urban school systems had supplementary requisitions, ranging from three and one-half to twelve mills. The six systems without elementary school oral French programs were among the eighteen systems with additional levies. Twelve systems with a French program claimed that the present program was no severe financial strain but that an extension of the program would require additional financial aid.

Articulation with Junior High School Program

At the junior high school level, all school systems were using the Voix et Images de France program which is based on Le Français Fondamental, a list of the most common French words and expressions. As both Parlons Français and Bonjour Line are based on the same word list, articulation between elementary and junior high school programs is now assured to a high degree. Before sequential programs were developed, articulation was a serious problem, and many useless repetitions took place; but, according to forty interviewees, this groping period has come to an end. With the advent of aural-oral programs in the elementary and junior high schools, the need of the same type of program for the senior high school became evident. In order to meet this need, the Department of Education approved the Six-Year Sequential Program in French for Grades Seven to Twelve in March, 1966, and the offering at the Grade Seven level began in September, 1966. The same interviewees were inclined to think that good articulation would be found between junior high school and senior high school French courses. The general opinion, however, was that it was still too early to be absolutely sure about every phase of articulation between junior and senior high school programs.

Scheduling Problems

The statement was often made that a school encountered most of the scheduling problems in the first two or three years of operation with a French program. As time went on and experience increased, the school met fewer and fewer problems in this area. Ten systems declared that no scheduling problems existed in their schools. Telecast programs had the effect of "tying down" the whole school timetable for a certain period every day; and, for this reason, principals were slightly dissatisfied with the rigidity. In these systems, several teachers of French were a necessity in order to take full advantage of the televised program.

One superintendent of a school system without a French program expressed the fear that the introduction of French in the elementary school would create many timetable conflicts. Another superintendent believed that scheduling would become a difficult problem when team teaching would be introduced for oral French instruction. Most superintendents, however, did not think that team teaching would ever be used extensively for second language instruction at the elementary school level. With an extension of the oral French offering in breadth and in depth, the general opinion was that a whole series of timetable complications would be created and that two or three years of experience would be required to arrive at a satisfactory solution.

Pupil Interest

The interviewees were in agreement that pupil interest was very high in the first and second years of the program. The high interest was possibly the result of the novelty of the teaching approach and the use of technical aids. It was stated that pupil interest was closely related to the enthusiasm and eagerness of the teacher for oral French.

After two or three years of learning by means of this active method, the pupils seemed to lose a good part of their interest. The administrators believed that the pupils, at this stage, had reached a level of maturation that called for a readjustment in the program. The introduction of writing and reading as a means of maintaining high pupil interest beyond the first two or three years of French instruction was advocated. It was also felt that pupil interest would be increased if the writing and reading dealt with Canadian and local events and settings, instead of strange and unknown counterparts in distant France.

To accommodate pupil interest, many systems had made the French program compulsory for two or three years and then made it optional beyond the compulsory period. Under this plan, at least half of the pupils chose French as an exploratory or optional subject in junior high school.

Teacher Interest

The administrators interviewed were full of praise and admiration for their teachers of French. In the initial years of the program, though teacher acquaintance with programs and equipment was largely lacking, many teachers volunteered to offer the French program on a learn-as-you-go basis. As time went on, the oral French needs of teacher quantity and quality became better known. The experience thus gained proved most valuable in organizing preservice and inservice education programs to produce the teachers required. The program supervisors of four large school systems stated that teacher response was one of the highlights of their inservice education programs. These school systems had a few more teachers of French than they could use under the present oral French policy of their school boards.

A point made by most of the administrators was that pupil interest was directly related to teacher interest and enthusiasm. The same remark also applied to principals and program supervisors, and positive school staff and system staff support meant a great deal for a successful program.

One school system with no French program claimed that no program could be initiated at the moment because the elementary school teachers showed little interest in oral

French. A new recruitment approach was gradually changing the attitude of the teaching staff, and plans were being laid for a program of oral French in a few selected elementary schools for the 1967-68 school year.

Continuity of Program

The great majority of interviewees maintained that most of the elementary oral French programs available today were fairly sound and sequential. The continuity of growth and development in learning oral French was quite well assured by the programs for eight or nine years. The more serious aspect of continuity was related to instances where the program was offered for one year and was not offered at the next level the following year. It was deemed a waste of time and effort to offer an oral French program for only one year in the elementary school. In the fourteen school systems offering oral French at the elementary school level, not one case was found where the oral French program was not offered on a continuous basis.

When television stations could not provide time for the telecast of the Parlons Français program, the resourcefulness of one large school system was taxed to the limit in finding a solution based on the rapid transportation of the program materials from school to school on a tight schedule for use by individual teachers. This school system made a

special effort to assure the continuity of the program. Though lack of continuity was a grave problem in the initial stages of oral French programs, the fourteen school systems with French programs lately have succeeded quite well in obtaining at least the minimum number of teachers of French required for their programs. The fact that some elementary oral French programs are designed to enable one teacher of French to offer French instruction to several classes during the school day has greatly helped in guaranteeing the continuity of programs in the smaller and more isolated urban school systems.

Selection of Pupils

As shown in Table XV, the most popular practice was to have all pupils in a block of grades follow the oral French program. Two school systems offered the program to all pupils in Grades Three to Six; eight systems included all Grade Four, Grade Five, and Grade Six pupils; three systems were offering French to all pupils in Grades Five and Six; and one system used general mental ability as a basis to offer French to the top one-third of the pupils in Grades Three to Six.

During 1966-67, thirteen urban school systems out of fourteen believed that all pupils should be given the opportunity of learning French at the elementary school level.

TABLE XV
SELECTION OF PUPILS FOR ORAL FRENCH
IN FOURTEEN SCHOOL SYSTEMS

Methods of selection	Number of systems
All pupils in block of grades	13
Ability grouping - top one-third	1

The thirteen systems also stated that, in junior high school, the interest and the ability of pupils became more and more important as factors of selection.

In two large school systems, it was originally the practice to let the principal decide whether or not to offer French at the elementary level. As four or five elementary schools were feeder schools for a junior high school, it often happened that Grade Seven pupils formed two groups--one group with a knowledge of French and the other group with no knowledge of French. With better communications among principals, this undesirable situation had been largely overcome within the past two years.

Grading of Pupils

As oral French was taught as an enjoyment or enrichment subject in seventeen of the schools visited, it should not be expected that any formal and rigid grading system had

been established. The most common comment made regarding the grading of pupils was that oral French was treated as one of the fine arts.

The systems using the Parlons Français program used television to administer comprehension and achievement tests to all pupils. The teachers marked the papers and forwarded the results to the program supervisors. The Bonjour Line teachers used special units to test the progress of the pupils and sent the results to the supervisors. In both instances, however, the results were used more for the information of the supervisors than for the grading of pupils. As thirty-two interviewees considered oral French as one of the fine arts, they agreed that there should be no failures and that a three-point scale should be employed in giving an evaluation. At this level and at this stage, no advantages were seen in having a rigorous grading system. In arriving at an evaluation, the teachers used the following guidelines: interest, attitude, listening ability, oral effort, participation, ability to follow directions, fluency, pronunciation, and written test results.

Table XVI shows the various practices used for reporting and report cards in the fourteen urban school systems offering oral French in their elementary schools.

With respect to reporting and report cards, two

TABLE XVI
GRADING OF PUPILS ON
REPORT CARDS

Methods of grading	Number of systems
No grading	2
H-A-B grading	5
50 - 100% grading	3
Insert with comment	2
Grading same as other subjects	2

school systems did not give a mark or grading for oral French; five systems used an H-A-B grading scale; three systems made use of percentage marks ranging from 50 to 100 per cent; two systems used an insert in the report card, with a general comment about the pupil's progress in oral French; and the principals of two systems treated the grading of pupil achievement in oral French on the same basis as the other elementary school subjects.

Accommodation of Classes

In the larger city school systems, the enrollment in the elementary school was slightly over thirty per classroom, while in the smaller systems, the enrollment was about twenty-five. Four superintendents stated that their schools were

overcrowded and that schools in new areas of development were unable to keep pace with the needs. In two systems, portable classrooms were relieving the situation; one system was using library and gymnasium space for temporary classrooms.

Seven of the twenty-six principals had set up special rooms for oral French programs, with the hope of creating an atmosphere more conducive to the study of the language. Where the program was telecast, three principals said that each teacher had a television set, and two principals stated that one television set was used by two classes. The most common arrangement, in systems without television, was to have the program materials mounted on a cart which was rolled into the classroom for the lesson and then stored in a neighbouring area when not in use.

In three school systems, all new elementary schools were being built with special rooms for French. As far as could be determined, the special features being incorporated in the construction of these rooms were multiple electrical outlets, room darkening facilities, several display areas, and very flexible seating provisions. Eleven school systems believed that modern elementary school classrooms possessed all the features required for the oral French program and did not think that any special construction design was necessary for the program. Once the building was constructed,

any room lent itself to the teaching of French and the school plant remained more functional in this case. This group also claimed that there was little need of display areas, as reading and writing were not introduced before junior high school. No urban school system had seen fit to install a language laboratory in one of its elementary schools.

Conditions of Work of Teachers of French

Sixteen principals stated that the conditions of work of all elementary school teachers were the same and that this situation was as it should be. Five schools granted more spares and more preparation periods to their teachers of French, as it was felt that the active method employed called for thorough planning of lessons and for a great deal of activity on the part of the teacher. Five principals were of the opinion that teachers of French required better conditions of work but that, under present arrangements, conditions could not be improved. Teachers of French, in one system, received an allowance of one hundred dollars a year over their regular salary.

In discussing conditions of work of teachers of French, the majority of interviewees preferred to comment about conditions of work of elementary school teachers generally. Mention was made of the need to improve working conditions to mirror what was found in the high school. It

was contended that, since successful high school education depends directly on the quality of teaching done at the elementary level, the most favourable conditions of work should be provided at this lower level. Elementary school teachers were already asking for enrollments under twenty-five, for preparation and marking time, and for local curriculum development opportunity. It stands to reason that improvements in the conditions of work of elementary school teachers would benefit teachers of French at the elementary school level.

School Boundaries and Conveyance

Before the interviews were conducted, it was anticipated that schools offering French and schools not offering French would be found side by side. It was also suspected that parents, in a number of cases, would rebel against the directives of the school system and would try to send their children to schools where French was or was not offered, depending upon the views of the individuals concerned. This state of dissatisfaction would have been a serious administrative problem. The interviews, however, revealed that nearly all school systems with a French program were offering French in all their elementary schools and that there were no program advantages to be gained by pupils who would attempt to attend schools to which they had not been directed by the

administration of the school system. As there existed definite attendance agreements between public and separate school systems, pupils could not change schools without prior permission. Problems in respect to school boundaries were found to be non-existent.

At one time, it was the practice in two school systems to let the elementary school principals decide whether or not to offer oral French. As the junior high school attendance area was composed of four or five elementary school attendance areas, it often happened that one-half of the Grade Seven pupils had studied French and the other half had received no French instruction. Through closer liaison among the principals concerned, this problem within the junior high school boundaries was disappearing quickly.

At least four school divisions and counties, instead of operating their own schools in or near independent towns and cities, had entered into tuition fee agreements with the town or city school authorities. Under these tuition fee agreements, divisional and county pupils living near the towns and cities were transported to the town and city schools for their education. Five urban school systems with tuition fee agreements with surrounding divisional or county school authorities had found that lengthening the school day was tied down to convenient bussing hours for rural pupils,

especially during the winter months. As bus roads were being improved rapidly by municipal councils and county committees, the problem, however, was growing less and less serious. Five superintendents, three supervisors, and nine principals were of the opinion that arranging for the convenient transportation of rural pupils was removing some flexibility in the whole school program.

Inservice Education Programs

The seven school systems with program supervisors had organized inservice education programs for their teachers of French. The inservice education activities carried on by these school systems were a television series especially prepared for teachers of French making use of the Parlons Français program, a series of fifteen weekly lectures, credit and non-credit courses offered by the universities, annual institutes, a Chilton-sponsored course,¹ fall and spring convention sessions, and monthly staff meetings. Because of their proximity to large systems, three smaller school

¹The Center for Curriculum Development in Audio-Visual Language Teaching is an organization set up by Chilton Books, Educational Division, Chilton Company, Philadelphia, U. S. A., which publishes and distributes the program materials for Bonjour Line and Voix et Images de France. Short courses, workshops, and seminars are sponsored by the organization in and out of Philadelphia for second language teachers. A Chilton-sponsored workshop was conducted in Edmonton, Alberta, in June, 1966.

systems without program supervisors were able to share in many activities of their neighbours and were well satisfied with the results. There were five isolated school systems which did not stress inservice education for oral French because of the lack of facilities and personnel and because of the small number of teachers concerned. In these five small school systems, the administrators relied heavily on the teachers for all aspects of elementary school oral French.

IV. OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS

During the course of the interviews, a number of administrative problems which were not included in the original list of sixteen specific problems, were suggested and discussed by some of the interviewees. As these additional administrative problems related to elementary school oral French programs made a definite contribution to the total view or picture of the study, they were compiled and summarized in this section.

Population Mobility

Six school systems complained that their oral French programs suffered considerably from high pupil mobility. During the 1966-67 school year, one Canadian Armed Forces Base school system witnessed at least a 50 per cent change

in its total school population and in its enrollment in oral French classes. Most of the rural pupils moving into urban school systems had had no previous experience with French and, out of necessity, were enrolled in classes which had had several months of French. When this happened, the newcomers found themselves in a very unhappy situation, and the progress of the regular class was slowed down greatly. In five small urban school systems, the administrators stated that the rural-to-urban movement of population was still quite pronounced in 1966-67; and, as few counties and school divisions had oral French programs at the elementary school level, the disadvantages already mentioned were very real.

Retention of Teachers of French

The retention of teachers of French from year to year was considered a problem by some systems. Overworked teachers of French elected to return to regular teaching where the expenditure of energy was somewhat less. This problem was especially acute in school systems which employed one teacher to teach several classes of French per day. The teacher exchange program favoured bilingual teachers and thus attracted several teachers of French. It was also mentioned several times that the larger urban systems often "picked up" the best teachers of the smaller centres.

Adequate and Standby Equipment

The quality and the pace of instruction in French apparently would benefit greatly if the required equipment were available. Eight principals complained that projectors and tape-recorders were in very short supply and that the teachers of French seemed to have a monopoly on these articles. In certain schools, the French program had to be cancelled when the regular equipment broke down. These principals felt that one standby projector and one standby tape-recorder would be very useful in schools with six or more French classes. Four principals were interested in experimenting with a language laboratory at the elementary school level; finances, however, were too limited to enable this type of experimentation.

Supervisors and Consultants

The great majority of interviewees realized that more supervisors and consultants were required for their programs. Because of financial limitations, school systems could not afford to go beyond the present arrangements without adverse effects on the other elementary school subjects. In most cases, school trustees and educational administrators had agreed to establish a certain priority by requiring that 60 per cent of the school day was to be devoted to the core subjects and 40 per cent to the other subjects, including

oral French. Under the leadership of qualified supervisors and consultants, teachers of French could make fuller use of the time set aside for oral French.

Outlet for French

Ten interviewees deplored the fact that, outside of the French class, there was no outlet for the use of French. It was believed that the learning of French would be greatly motivated and stepped up if what was learned in the classroom could be put to use after school hours. It was suggested that, on an experimental basis, a small pupil exchange program be tried with Alberta centres having a fairly high number of French-speaking families.

In at least two school systems, the parents themselves had realized the need of an outlet for French and had been instrumental in getting schools to organize evening classes in oral French for interested adults. With this background, the parents themselves would be able to converse in French with their children.

Educational and Instructional Television

The school systems in the two largest cities of the province were keenly aware of the vast potential of educational and instructional television. The control of television facilities and telecast schedules appeared to be a key factor for flexibility in the school program. The three

school systems using the Parlons Français oral French program for elementary school asserted that the need of educational and instructional television was their most serious administrative problem.

Bilingual Teacher Aides and Secretaries

Four principals stated that, with teacher aides becoming more and more popular, a great many para-professional activities connected with the oral French program could be left in the hands of bilingual teacher aides and that the energy of teachers of French could be devoted to teaching. Two program supervisors expressed the wish to have bilingual secretaries who could be relied upon for most of the office work which had to be done in French. In this manner, the supervisors would be freed to spend more time in planning, supervision, and inservice education.

Ability Grouping

Seven interviewees claimed that all available programs had been prepared for slow-to-average pupils and that superior pupils found the rate of progress too slow and, as a consequence, lost their interest in learning oral French. Some form of ability grouping was suggested to enable pupils to move ahead in accordance with their interest and ability. Two school systems were planning to introduce reading and writing to assist able pupils in their progress.

Canadian Programs

Most of the elementary school oral French programs available were French or American creations and failed to take into consideration the interest of Canadian pupils. Nine educators believed that a program with Canadian flavour could easily be designed. At the elementary school level, Canadian themes and settings appeared to have more appeal and motivation possibilities.

Method of Financing

Four superintendents voiced their disapproval of the present method of obtaining additional funds for education. The fact that a town or city council may apply to the Local Authorities Board for an examination of the budget estimates of the district usually meant that the very minimum amount of financial support would be requested by the school board from the supporters of the district. In too many instances education was being blamed unjustly for any increase in the mill rate. As many school services, including oral French, had to be offered with the minimum expenditure of funds, it was felt that innovations and experiments were unduly curtailed. The four superintendents believed that the province should shoulder a larger part of the financial load of education. If additional sources of provincial revenue were required to finance a larger share of education costs, the

four interviewees were convinced that a sales tax or a larger income tax could be imposed by the provincial government.

V. INTERVIEWEES' SUGGESTIONS

Role of the Department of Education

Six interviewees expressed the hope that the Department of Education would, in the near future, find ways and means of giving some recognition to elementary school oral French programs. The recognition desired could take the form of a few guidelines in the Program of Studies for Elementary Schools of Alberta. Only one or two administrators favoured more Department of Education prescription and control of oral French programs. As elementary school oral French was now offered on a fairly large scale, it was felt that some form of coordination through the central department would be of great benefit to all school systems with a program and to the Department of Education itself. The same interviewees claimed that more efficiency and faster progress in the implementation of oral French programs would result from the unity and harmony created by central department coordination.

Quebec-Trained Teachers

Two school systems were prepared to obtain teachers

of French from Quebec where the supply would be large enough to satisfy the needs of their school systems. This source of teachers of French, however, could not easily be tapped because of the difficulties involved in obtaining the proper teacher education documents required for the evaluation of teacher education. It was felt that the slow pace and the complicated process of teacher evaluation often discouraged teachers from applying to teach in Alberta schools.

Bursaries for French

The need of teachers of French in the smaller city systems and the need of program supervisors of French in all systems with a French program were deemed valid reasons to request that some kind of a bursary plan be considered for the study of French. With the proper safeguard of the provincial prerogative in education, federal aid for such a bursary was thought a distinct possibility by eleven interviewees, for the federal government was already committed to a policy of bilingualism and biculturalism.

Research

Oral French instruction at the elementary school level began twelve years ago in two Alberta urban school systems; and, by trial-and-error methods, a great deal was learned about the implementation of oral French programs. Ten interviewees, however, wanted more research in the field of

second language instruction in order to obtain reliable answers to basic questions of the type listed below:

1. At what age should a child begin the study of a second language for maximum results?
2. What is the best method of selecting pupils for a second language program?
3. Does the study of a second language interfere with the learning of one's maternal tongue?
4. What kind of programs give the best results?
5. How much time can the elementary school devote to oral French without ill effects on the other school subjects?
6. When should reading and writing be introduced in the oral French program?

Experimentation

As outlets for the use of French after school hours were difficult to find, it was suggested by two interviewees that one or two schools in the larger urban school systems should experiment with the use of French as the language of instruction in the teaching of school subjects or some units of school subjects, like social studies. It was felt that using French as the language of instruction for some phase of the regular teaching would give purpose to the study of French and would provide the outlet desired for the use of French.

The two interviewees wanted to see one or two schools of this type set up in one or two large city systems. The school or schools would offer some of the elementary school subjects in French, and the full cooperation of parents and pupils would be necessary for the enrollment of pupils in this type of school. The idea of a school offering a number of subjects in French had been advanced at the 1966 Fall French Institute held in St. Paul, Alberta, by Dr. E. J. H. Greene, Head of the Department of Romance Languages, University of Alberta.¹

Need of Programs and Readers

As some need of Canadian programs and readers was evidenced by the remarks of nine educators, the suggestion was made that a survey be carried out to determine whether or not book companies, universities, institutions, or private individuals would be interested in preparing programs and series of readers. With the number of pupils involved in elementary oral French in Alberta alone, it appeared that such a venture would be commercially sound. Two program supervisors already had very definite ideas about the content and scope of the series of readers.

¹News item in the St. Paul Journal, November 3, 1966.

Equipment

To ensure the smooth operation of the Bonjour Line oral French program, eight principals stressed the need of having on hand the necessary equipment. Faulty equipment usually meant that the French lesson had to be cancelled. To overcome this unhappy situation, they favoured having one filmstrip projector and one tape-recorder as standby machines in schools where six or more rooms offered the oral French program.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. SUMMARY

The study was undertaken to discover the present-day administrative problems related to elementary school oral French programs in the twenty urban school systems of the province. As very little information could be found in the literature dealing with elementary oral French programs, it was decided to collect the data by means of a series of structured interview schedules to be answered by superintendents, program supervisors, and elementary school principals of the urban school systems of Alberta. For the purpose of this study, an urban or city school system was defined as an Alberta school system employing a locally-appointed superintendent of schools. During the 1966-67 school year, there were twenty school systems with locally-appointed superintendents of schools. The interviews were held with twenty superintendents of schools, seven supervisors of French, and twenty-six elementary school principals.

The three schedules of structured interviews were designed to obtain information about the interviewees and their schools or school systems, to discuss sixteen specific

administrative problems, to elicit comments about additional administrative problems, and to request suggestions for improvement. The shortest interview took sixty minutes, and the longest lasted one hundred eighty-five minutes.

The sixteen specific administrative problems related to elementary school oral French instruction, which were discussed and explored in depth, covered the following points:

1. General teacher supply
2. Supply of teachers of French
3. Community expectations and support
4. Availability of programs
5. Cost of programs
6. Articulation with junior high school programs
7. Scheduling problems
8. Pupil interest
9. Teacher interest
10. Continuity of programs
11. Selection of pupils
12. Grading of pupils
13. Accommodation of classes
14. Conditions of work of teachers of French
15. School boundaries and conveyance
16. Inservice education programs

The interviewees contributed ten additional problems

that also received attention in the study of oral French programs. The following administrative problems were mentioned and discussed at some length:

1. Population mobility
2. Retention of teachers of French
3. Adequate and standby equipment
4. Need of leadership
5. Outlet for French
6. Educational and instructional television
7. French teacher aides and secretaries
8. Ability grouping
9. Canadian programs
10. Educational finance

The fifty-three school administrators made a sincere effort to comment constructively about various phases of the elementary school oral French programs and to bring forward suggestions capable of implementation. The main conclusions of the study are listed in the next section.

II. CONCLUSIONS

During the 1966-67 school year, fourteen city school systems had elementary school oral French programs, and six systems had not seen fit to offer oral French. Each system with a program appeared to have its own special set of administrative problems, and only a few problems seemed to be

applicable to all the fourteen systems.

As far as the number of pupils is concerned, the most serious problem is access to television facilities and control of the telecasting schedules for the implementation of the Parlons Français program. Table VII, page 37, shows that 7,024 pupils, during 1966-67, were carrying on the study of French by means of a makeshift arrangement based on the rapid transportation of films from school to school. According to the school administrators concerned, the makeshift arrangement was quite expensive and somewhat unsatisfactory. Table VII, page 37, also indicates that 22,148 additional pupils are likely to be deprived of televised lessons in the near future. When it is borne in mind that 29,172 pupils (Table VIII, page 40) are involved in this case, the importance of finding a solution to this problem is most evident.

The shortage of special subject teachers is general and is affecting all urban school systems. The larger urban systems are able to recruit the required number of regular classroom teachers and, through inservice education, can produce the number of teachers of French required for the present program. An extension of present oral French programs cannot be undertaken under existing conditions of supply of teachers of French. There is also a need of more supervisors of French which cannot be satisfied at the

moment.

In the smaller urban school systems, staffing at all levels and for all positions is a very serious problem. Though some slight improvement in teacher supply has been noticed lately, the problem of teacher shortage will remain with small systems for a few more years. In order to relieve the shortage of teachers of French in the smaller urban school systems and to provide the number of teachers of French required for a possible program extension in all systems, several superintendents and program supervisors advocated a concerted recruitment drive of Quebec teachers of French and suggested a comprehensive bursary plan for teachers of French. As the universities of the province have recently moved into the field of teacher preparation for elementary school French, school administrators believe that the supply of teachers of French will improve quite rapidly.

Lack of adequate equipment is considered a serious drawback to the smooth implementation of the Bonjour Line oral French program. The six systems using the program complained about the cancellation of lessons because of unexpected breakdowns in equipment. In some schools, there were also complaints that teachers of French had a monopoly on technical aids, like tape-recorders and filmstrip projectors. Three additional school systems would likely adopt the Bonjour Line program if funds were available for the

program materials and the equipment. Mention was also made that instructional materials with a definite Canadian flavour would create a greater interest in oral French and would be conducive to a fuller appreciation of the country.

To the objection that too much attention to oral French would harm instruction in the other subjects of the elementary school, most of the interviewees replied that this was a remote possibility and that a great deal of ground could be covered before any such danger became a reality. Only through experimentation and research could problems basic to second language instruction be answered with a large degree of accuracy. The size and scope of elementary school oral French programs in Alberta urban school systems appeared to justify a sincere effort and a sound plan to achieve the goal set--the ability to speak French as a native speaker of the language. It was feared that a complacent attitude and a feeling of total satisfaction at the moment would lead to lukewarm results and gradual withdrawal of favourable public support. An outlet for the use of French could be found by teaching some units of other elementary school subjects in French. This practice would likely give added weight and purpose to the learning of the second language. The hope was expressed that a large city system would set up a school for pupils whose parents

endorsed and supported the policy of teaching some elementary school subjects in French. The suggestions for teaching some units of subjects in French and for teaching some subjects in French were made with the understanding that these experiments would be conducted in a scientific way and that all findings would be disseminated to all interested parties.

The matters of leadership and coordination are closely related and are a cause of concern to some school administrators. The leadership and coordination wanted could be provided by the Department of Education, the Modern and Classical Language Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association, the universities of the province, or a combination of the three groups. The last suggestion--a combination of the three groups--seems preferable from the point of view of involvement. With the exchange of ideas and views about elementary school oral French programs, fostered by leadership and coordination, all school systems would reap the full benefits of experience, experimentation, and research. Improvement in the exchange of information among systems offering oral French would supply school administrators with guidelines for decision-making by suggesting the most common practice in dealing with each individual administrative problem.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A few comments and guidelines about elementary oral French should be included in the Program of Studies for Elementary Schools of Alberta in order to give oral French a status at least equal to the status of the fine arts.

2. The Department of Education, the Modern and Classical Language Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association, and the universities of the province should take the initiative in organizing the competent body necessary to provide the leadership and the coordination requested by the school systems.

3. The proposed leadership and coordination body, once established, should take steps to investigate the possibility of setting up a number of bursaries for teachers of French by seeking the financial assistance of groups, like the federal government, the Alberta Bilingual Teachers' Association, and the Alberta French Canadian Association.

4. The possibility of designing primary oral French programs and Canadian oral French programs should be studied closely by the proposed leadership and coordination body.

5. Pending the results of the present educational television studies being carried out in the province, school systems using the Parlons Français program appear to have

much to gain by retaining the services of commercial stations for the telecast of their French program, even if the broadcast time is not entirely satisfactory.

6. As audio-visual media are now used extensively in teaching, the School Foundation Program allowance per pupil should be increased sufficiently to enable school systems to obtain the necessary equipment.

7. The Department of Education should encourage experiments with the use of French as the language of instruction for other subjects of the elementary school curriculum, and the results of the experiments should be made known as soon as the experiments have been completed.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX A

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

SCHEDULE A*

SUPERINTENDENTS

INTRODUCTION

I propose to make a study of the administrative problems related to oral French programs in the elementary school. In order to collect the necessary data, I have decided to use the structured interview method with urban superintendents, program supervisors, and principals. It should be noted that, at no time, will the identity of the interviewees be revealed.

I wish to assure you that your close cooperation and kind assistance are deeply appreciated.

S. D. LeFebvre

*The first nine pages of Schedule A are reproduced as they appeared in the original schedule. Pages 10-21 of the original schedule have been condensed by eliminating the spaces provided for replies and comments.

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Superintendent's teacher education ____ years
2. Year last attended university ____
3. Number of French courses taken at university ____
4. Modern and Classical Language Council member at
one time? Yes ____ No ____
5. Modern and Classical Language Council member this
year? Yes ____ No ____
6. Receiving publications for teachers of French?
Yes ____ No ____
7. Other information given:

II. INFORMATION ABOUT SYSTEM

1. List school system enrollment per grade:

Grade 1 ____

Grade 4 ____

Grade 2 ____

Grade 5 ____

Grade 3 ____

Grade 6 ____

2. Is the school system offering an oral French program in the elementary school this year?

Yes ____

No ____

Why or why not? (Real reasons wanted.)

3. Should the elementary school offer an oral French program? Yes ____ No ____

(Reasons for or against to be listed and probed.)

4. How was instruction time made available for oral French? What subjects suffered a reduction in instruction time?
5. How satisfactory is this arrangement for subjects with reduced instruction time?
6. Is the oral French program able to compensate for the reduction in instruction time, e.g., social studies--enterprise?

7. When should oral French instruction begin in the elementary school?

List grade(s) mentioned. _____

(Ask for reasons.)

8. If it is impossible to offer oral French at all grade levels, in what grades should it be taught?

List grades mentioned. _____

(Probe for reasons.)

9. If the supply of teachers of French had been adequate, how many additional teachers would the system have employed for service in the elementary school?

List the number of teachers. _____

(Attempt to find out what efforts were made to obtain teachers.)

III. TECHNICAL AIDS

In the system's oral French program, what role is played by the following technical aids?

1. Television:

2. Films:

3. Language Laboratories:

4. Filmstrips:

5. Recordings:

6. Other Aids:

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS

1. Please discuss some of the administrative problems encountered in the implementation of an oral French program in the elementary school.

(Let interviewee list his problems. Make sure the interviewee touches upon the problems listed on the next eight pages. Use back of pages, if needs be.)

2. In respect to the following list of administrative problems, stress should be laid on the practical.

- (a) General teacher supply
- (b) Supply of teachers of French
- (c) Community expectations and support
- (d) Availability of programs
- (e) Cost of programs
- (f) Articulation with junior high school and senior high school programs
- (g) Scheduling problems
- (h) Pupil interest
- (i) Teacher interest
- (j) Continuity of program from year to year
- (k) Selection of pupils for program
- (l) Grading of pupils
- (m) Accommodation of classes

- (n) Conditions of work of teachers of French
- (o) School boundaries and conveyance
- (p) Inservice education program

3. Are there other administrative problems related to oral French programs that should be discussed?

V. COMMENTS

1. Please comment on any phase or problem of the oral French program.

VI. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. Please make suggestions for the improvement of the oral French program.

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

SCHEDULE B**

PROGRAM SUPERVISORS

INTRODUCTION

I propose to make a study of the administrative problems related to oral French programs in the elementary school. In order to collect the necessary data, I have decided to use the structured interview method with urban superintendents, program supervisors, and principals. It should be noted that, at no time, will the identity of the interviewee be revealed.

I wish to assure you that your close cooperation and generous assistance are deeply appreciated.

S. D. LeFebvre

**The first six pages of Schedule B are reproduced as they appeared in the original schedule. The remaining pages of the original schedule have been condensed by eliminating the spaces provided for replies and comments.

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Supervisor's teacher education ____ years
2. Year last attended university ____
3. Number of French courses taken at university ____
4. Ability to speak French? Fluent ____
Fair ____ Nil ____
5. Modern and Classical Language Council member at
one time? Yes ____ No ____
6. Modern and Classical Language Council member this
year? Yes ____ No ____
7. Receiving publications for teachers of French?
Yes ____ No ____
8. Years of experience as supervisor ____
9. Other information given:

II. INFORMATION ABOUT SYSTEM

1. For how many years has the school system been offering an oral French program?
_____ years
2. How many elementary schools are there in the system?
_____ schools
3. How many elementary schools offer an oral French program?
_____ schools
4. How many teachers of French are there in the elementary school section?
_____ teachers
5. If an oral French program has had to be abandoned, reduced, or expanded, please state the reasons.
(Seek to secure practical, not theoretical, information.)
6. How is instruction time in the other subjects affected by the oral French program? What are the effects?

III. TECHNICAL AIDS

1. List the equipment available for the oral French program.
2. What are the problems in making the equipment available to teachers at the right time?
3. What are the problems connected with teacher use?
4. List the problems related to repair and upkeep.

5. What use is made of the following?

(a) Television

(b) Radio

(c) Language Laboratory

(d) Tapes

(e) Records

(f) Films

(g) Filmstrips

(h) Other Aids

6. Please describe the facilities for storing equipment and filing program materials.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS

1. Please discuss some of the administrative problems encountered in the implementation of an oral French program in the elementary school.

(Let the interviewee list his problems. Make sure the interviewee touches upon the problems listed on the next eight pages. Use back of pages, if needs be.)
2. In respect to the following list of administrative problems, stress should be laid on the practical.
 - (a) General teacher supply
 - (b) Supply of teachers of French
 - (c) Community expectations and support
 - (d) Availability of programs
 - (e) Cost of programs
 - (f) Articulation with junior high school and senior high school programs
 - (g) Scheduling problems
 - (h) Pupil interest
 - (i) Teacher interest
 - (j) Continuity of program from year to year
 - (k) Selection of pupils for program

- (l) Grading of pupils
- (m) Accommodation of classes
- (n) Conditions of work of teachers of French
- (o) School boundaries and conveyance
- (p) Inservice education program

3. Are there other administrative problems related to oral French programs that should be discussed?

V. COMMENTS

- 1. Please comment on any phase or problem of the oral French program.

VI. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- 1. Kindly make suggestions for the improvement of the oral French program.

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

SCHEDULE C***

PRINCIPALS

INTRODUCTION

I propose to make a study of the administrative problems related to oral French programs in the elementary school. In order to collect the necessary data, I have decided to use the structured interview method with urban superintendents, program supervisors, and principals. It should be noted that, at no time, will the identity of the interviewee be revealed.

I wish to assure you that your close cooperation and kind assistance are deeply appreciated.

S. D. LeFebvre

***The first eight pages of Schedule C are reproduced as they appeared in the original schedule. The remaining pages of the original schedule have been condensed by eliminating the spaces provided for replies and comments.

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Principal's teacher education ____ years
2. Year last attended university ____
3. French courses taken at university ____
4. Ability to speak French? Fluent ____ Fair ____
Nil ____
5. Modern and Classical Language Council member at
one time? Yes ____ No ____
6. Modern and Classical Language Council member
this year? Yes ____ No ____
7. Receiving publications for teachers of French?
Yes ____ No ____
8. Experience as principal in years ____
9. Other information given:

II. INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOL

1. Enrollment per grade of pupils registered in oral French program

Grade 1 _____

Grade 4 _____

Grade 2 _____

Grade 5 _____

Grade 3 _____

Grade 6 _____

2. For best results, at what grade level should French instruction begin?

State grade or grades _____

Why?

3. How long has the school been offering an oral French program?

_____ years

4. How many teachers are teaching oral French in this school?

_____ teachers

5. Name of the program or method used _____

Why is the method named used?

6. How many periods per week is oral French offered?

Why?

7. What is the length of each period in minutes? _____
Why?

8. To include an oral French program in the school timetable, the school had to reduce instruction time for other subjects. What subjects were affected?

9. Does oral French compensate in some way for the reduction in instruction time for other subjects, e.g., social studies--enterprise?

10. Is the program taught completely in French?

Yes ____ No ____

Why or why not?

11. When is writing introduced? _____

Why or why not?

12. How is pupil achievement evaluated?

What factors are considered?

13. Why should oral French be offered in the elementary school?

14. Describe the use made of French in the following:

(a) P.A. announcements

(b) Displays

(c) Class and school programs and concerts

(d) Recess periods

(e) Other activities

III. TECHNICAL AIDS

1. List audio-visual equipment and aids used in the oral French program.
2. What use is made of materials from the Audio-Visual Services Branch?
3. Are materials from the National Film Board used?
4. What other sources of materials have been found useful?

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS

1. Please discuss some of the administrative problems encountered in the implementation of an oral French program in the elementary school.

(Let the interviewee list his problems. Make sure the interviewee touches upon the problems listed on the next eight pages. Use back of pages, if necessary.)

2. In respect of the following list of administrative problems, stress should be laid on the practical.

- (a) General teacher supply
- (b) Supply of teachers of French
- (c) Community expectations and support
- (d) Availability of programs
- (e) Cost of programs
- (f) Articulation with junior and senior high school programs
- (g) Scheduling problems
- (h) Pupil interest
- (j) Continuity of program from year to year
- (k) Selection of pupils for program
- (l) Grading of pupils
- (m) Accommodation of classes
- (n) Condition of work of teachers of French

(o) School boundaries and conveyance

(p) Inservice education program

3. Are there other administrative problems related to oral French programs that should be discussed?

V. COMMENTS

1. Please comment on any phase or problem of the oral French program.

VI. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. Kindly make suggestions for the improvement of the oral French program.

APPENDIX B

LETTER AND SUMMARY TO SUPERINTENDENTS

P.O. Box 164
St. Paul, Alberta,
December 8, 1966.

Dear Superintendent of Schools:

Re: Data for M. Ed. Thesis

I propose to make a study of the administrative problems related to oral French programs in the elementary school. In order to collect the necessary data, I have decided to use the structured interview method with urban superintendents, program supervisors, and some principals of elementary schools offering an oral French program. It is believed that the twenty urban school systems will be visited during the months of December and January.

If your school system is offering oral French at the elementary school level, kindly supply the following information:

1. Name and office address of your elementary school supervisor of French
2. Name and school address of principals in charge of schools offering an oral French program at the elementary school level

If your school system has no oral French program in Grades 1-6, I would still like to meet the superintendent to discuss certain aspects of an oral French program.

Kindly note that a summary of the main points of the structured interview is enclosed. Copies of the summary will be distributed to program supervisors and principals as soon as their names have been received. It is with great anticipation that I await your prompt reply.

Respectfully yours,

(Signed)
S. D. LeFebvre

P.O. Box 164,
St. Paul, Alberta,
December 8, 1966.

Dear School Administrator:

Re: Structured Interview

In order to save as much time as possible, I have summarized the main points of the structured interview schedule which I wish to use with you on my visit to your school or school system. I hope the summary will be of some assistance to you in preparing for the interview.

Main Points

1. Interviewee's professional background, e.g., teacher education.
2. Information about school or school system, e.g., pupil enrollment, number of teachers.
3. Use of technical aids, e.g., audio-visual equipment and aids.
4. Administrative problems related to oral French program in the elementary school. The interviewee will be asked to list and explain the administrative problems encountered.
5. Comments about oral French. The interviewee will be given the opportunity to comment at length on any phase or problem of the oral French program.
6. Suggestions for improvement. The interviewee will be requested to make suggestions for the improvement of the oral French program.

In advance, I wish to thank you most sincerely for your valuable assistance and kind attention.

Respectfully yours,

(Signed)
S. D. LeFebvre

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